

# SUPPORT SERVICES THAT ENABLE COLLEGE STUDENTS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS TO SUCCEED IN POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

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## Research Questions

- What are the support services, as identified by college students with ASD, that enables a successful transition from high school to college?
- What are the identified needs of college students with ASD?
- Do college students with ASD feel they have adequate support to be successful in college?

## Method

- Qualitative study – non-experimental, mixed-method approach
- Participant Recruitment: College-Based (i.e. university support staff) and Community-Based Resources (i.e. various autism support networks)
- Multiple Face-to-Face Interviews & Online/Paper Survey (Triangulation)

## Participants

- 2 participants (“A” & “B”)
- Both 21 year old male, 3<sup>rd</sup> year college students, Asperger’s syndrome (diagnosed in elementary school), living on campus

## Data Analysis: Qualitative Interviews

- “On a scale of 0-100 what percentage of your needs are being met right now?” “I’d probably say like 92%, if not 100” (A)
- “You’re not exactly going to be like best friends with your roommate...I mean I didn’t figure that out on my own I learned it from like a pamphlet or an E-mail...” (A)
- “I would change my ability to interpret people, whether that be their actions, facial expressions, and knowing and basically social cues – I know I have a hard time with that partially because I don’t interact and partially why I don’t interact. Because I don’t interact a lot, I don’t have the practice, so I don’t understand, so don’t generally interact and therefore I don’t make a fool of myself...but I can’t help it” (B)
- “I am perfectly happy spending the weekend by myself watching TV” (B)

## Conclusions

- What are the support services, as identified by college students with ASD, that enable a successful transition from high school to college?
  - Altering standard high school schedule
  - Utilizing special education resources
  - Smaller individualized instruction
  - Family expectations
- What are the identified needs of college students with ASD?
  - Individualized tutoring
  - Assistance with personal & academic organization
  - Professors willing to support students with ASD
- Do college students with ASD feel they have adequate support to be successful in college?
  - Both students expressed satisfaction with current level of support
  - Both students are highly involved in support services on campus

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